

REMARKS

Independent claims 1 and 17 were amended to additionally recite that the support carrier (that supports the films) is placed on a conveyor for passage past a sealing workstation, and that the resulting sealed film assembly is removable from the carrier.

Fig. 11 of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0094747 to Rouse discloses an upper film 86 and a lower film 88, both mounted directly on a conveyor 100. There is no support carrier on the conveyor 100 that is operative for supporting the films 86, 88 during passage through a sealing workstation. Instead, the films 86, 88 are supported by the conveyor itself.

As described in the second full paragraph of page 6 of the specification, it is conventional to seal films on a conveyor belt. Applicant's claimed support carrier provides the necessary stiffness to enable further processing, such as printing without misfeeds or roller wraparounds.

The same is true for U.S. Patent No. 4,545,844 to Buchanan in which, as best shown in Fig. 5, upper film W1 and lower film W2 are supported directly on a conveyor 20, and not on any support carrier placed on a conveyor.

The same is true for U.S. Patent No. 3,339,337 in which upper and lower 30, 32 portions of film 10 are supported on a conveyor 20.

Applicant notes that the Examiner has interpreted Buchanan as teaching a support carrier 13. Reference numeral 13 in Fig. 1A identifies one layer of the upper film W1. In fact, W1 is a laminate having three layers 13, 14, 15. To counter such an interpretation, claims 1 and 17 now recite that the sealed film assembly is removable from the carrier. Due to the laminated structure of W1, it cannot be argued that layers 14 and 15 are somehow removable from layer 13.

Independent claim 21 has been further amended to recite that the support carrier is a sheet, and that the films are removable from the carrier. These features are not shown in , or suggested by, any reference.

As for claim 22, this claim recites that a remote portion of a valve is adhered to one of the films. This is not shown in, or suggested by, U.S. Patent No. 4,721,491 to Buchanan which, at best, discloses a valve 11 through which a fill tube 16 is inserted. The fill tube 16 is movable between an open position (solid lines in Fig. 2) in which the balloon is inflated, and a closed position (dashed lines in Fig. 2) in which the escape of air from the balloon is prevented. However, no portion of the fill tube adheres to either of the films of which the balloon is comprised.

Petition is hereby made for a three-month extension of the period to respond to the outstanding Official Action to January 30, 2006. A check in the amount of \$510.00, as the Petition fee, is enclosed herewith. If there are any additional charges, or any overpayment, in connection with the filing of the amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any such deficiency, or credit any such overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-1145.

Wherefore, a favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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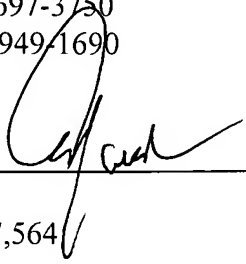
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